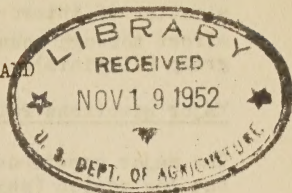


REPORT OF
SOUTHERN REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON PRE-SERVICE AND
GRADUATE TRAINING OF EXTENSION PERSONNEL

Knoxville, Tenn., May 16 and 17, 1952



The entire first day of the conference was devoted to a review of the extension education courses now being offered in each college represented at the meeting. Extension and college teaching staff members distributed course outlines and described special features of the services which they are offering to students enrolled in colleges of agriculture and home economics and interested in extension work. The high points of the pre-service and graduate training opportunities described by the representatives from each State were as follows:

1. State offerings in extension courses open to men and women students - Georgia and Kentucky.
2. State offerings in extension courses open to men students - Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Texas, and Virginia.
3. State offerings in extension courses open to women students - Alabama, Georgia, Tennessee, and Virginia.
4. States offering graduate programs in extension education - Louisiana, Mississippi, Tennessee.
5. States providing field experience - Alabama, Georgia, Tennessee, and Virginia.
6. States offering advisory services to students interested in extension - Louisiana, Tennessee, and Virginia.

There was evident interest in the provision of field experience, which varied from none in five States and 1 day in Texas to 1 quarter in Alabama and Tennessee. There is wide latitude in adequacy of planning and supervision of field experience as well as in payment of expenses to trainees. Payment of salary during the time of field work varies from \$80 per month in Alabama to \$225 per month in Georgia. Louisiana provides for men graduates 3 months of work experience at the experiment station preliminary to assignment to a State.

Compiled by Mary L. Collings, Secretary of the Land-Grant College Association
Senate Committee on Pre-Service and Graduate Training of Extension Personnel.

Efforts to keep in touch with students from freshman through senior year were a matter of interest to participants. Tennessee and Virginia have made special effort through counselor service (Tennessee) and through the campus 4-H Club group (Virginia).

Major questions raised in discussion

The major questions which were raised in attempt to appraise our work throughout the region (and Nation) were:

1. Are we giving recognition in the form of pay or advancement for the special training which we are providing? Do agents who have had these courses get ahead faster in professional advancement or pay? What differential do we provide for those who have had this training?
2. What can we do to keep in touch with the outstanding 4-H Club members between their club years and time for employment? We lose the majority of prospective agents to small local schools or to other professions during college years.
3. What can we do to give more balance to this training so that men and women extension workers can both have a good pre-service training program at each institution or at least in each State?

While these questions were raised, they were not even partially answered in the time allowed. One State or another is attempting some solutions to these three problems, but only a start has been made anywhere.

Panel discussion on need for graduate study for extension workers

The Saturday morning session was devoted to a discussion of the topic "The Need for Graduate Study for Extension Workers." Dean Jones was chairman of the panel. He reviewed the main ideas of his paper prepared last year for the committee on training. Briefly summarized, those ideas are:

1. Training of cooperative extension personnel, one phase of which is graduate training, is a duty of the land-grant colleges. Training in the graduate schools is of two types: General training and specialized training. The latter type of training is education for a particular position or type of position. The student may be looking to a new post in the Service, to improving his efficiency in his present job, or to satisfying his intellectual and personal curiosity.
2. A graduate training program is most satisfactory when students have had ample field experience. The value of academic training declines rapidly after the age of 35. It would seem unsound to plan any program of graduate work for men over forty, though individuals over forty may sometimes profit from graduate study.

3. The program of the Cooperative Extension Service can be efficiently handled only by mastery of each worker of an organized body of knowledge about his business. Members of the Service must have:
- a. Knowledge of the Service. Its history, legal and financial structure, functions and responsibilities.
 - b. Understanding of the learning process, psychology, selection and dissemination of materials, organizing and testing, educational programs, and other such aspects of a general education program.
 - c. Knowledge of arts and sciences. Our land-grant graduate schools will respond adequately to any demand for any of these three types of training. It is obvious that there is not sufficient demand for all branches of all three in many schools. In fact, it seems more likely that the schools will outrun the demand and diversify too fast, than that, with travel as easy as it is, workers will be unable to find what they want. I conceive that the attention of this committee needs to be directed primarily to disseminating of information about available training and to creating conditions whereby the workers capable of graduate training can get it, rather than to stimulating the establishment of new graduate training centers.
4. Graduate training programs of considerable length are needed. Too much emphasis cannot be given to the need for graduate study to be done in periods of sufficient length of time to make a permanent change in the habits of thought and action of the worker. Programs in graduate schools may or may not be directed toward degrees. If a trainee is in residence, however, he usually works more efficiently if he is in a degree program. Though this committee may decide to advocate a program of training combining short periods of study with in-service employment, I do not think it should delude itself that the values are in any way the same as in a period of study long enough for the trainee to become thoroughly acclimated to study as a way of life and habit to be acquired.
5. There is always a demand by employers that graduate schools adapt their pattern of training to the employers' desires without emasculating the training which they give. In three ways the employers' demands may be such that the graduate schools cannot meet the demands without undermining the integrity of the schools' professions. These demands may concern (a) time, (b) money, (c) ability of the trainee. I believe that the graduate schools would consider it very unfortunate if the Cooperative Extension Service, in forming its training program, did what the public schools have done--demand the external marks of training without a militant effort to preserve the integrity of the training itself.
6. The establishment of fellowships is a positive and vitally important way of encouraging graduate study. Our committee should expend its energies to the utmost to increase this form of contribution to our graduate training program.

In conclusion Dean Jones stated that "true upgrading of workers can only occur by greater expenditure of time, money, and ability--not by requirement of degrees and graduate training programs tailored to fit existing resources. Much of this depends on the Extension Service itself. If it grants the individual worker freedom and responsibility, a career of true public and social service, opportunities for personal enlargement of mind and spirit, and adequate compensation to provide for satisfactory family life and self-improvement, then the workers themselves will sacrifice to maintain and solidify their positions in the Service and will make personal sacrifices to get additional training. Moreover, the Service will attract and keep those of intellectual ability and integrity commensurate with an ambitious training program involving graduate work. If the Service contributes not only in these ways, but also in its administration of information, responsible shifting of duties of workers in line with their development, and the like, then a program involving successful graduate study is made far more possible than otherwise."

As second member of the panel, Miss Collings spoke briefly to these points:

1. Relatively few extension workers take cooperative study leave. Country-wide, this amounts to about 90 extension workers a year. Last year of the total, 8 were studying toward a doctor's degree, 45 for a master's degree, and 38 were on leave for the purpose of traveling to and conferring with staff members in other extension services, taking formal course work for other reasons than to secure an advanced degree, etc. What is the reason that such a large proportion of those on leave do not take work for credit?
2. There is need for some replacements for outstanding summer school instructors who are now, or soon will be, unavailable for these schools. Such men as Director Ramsower and Dr. Kruse are hard to replace. We need younger men with advanced training and outstanding abilities to supply our increased demands for instructors for these schools. A strong graduate program for extension men of promise would make them much more valuable as instructors. Should we think of a definite plan to prepare younger men to take over these responsibilities?
3. There are requests, particularly in home economics, for extension workers to enter positions of wider responsibilities in the colleges. These positions would provide an opportunity not only for professional advancement of the individuals themselves in responsibilities, academic rank, and salary, but would enable them to have an influence on relationships and other conditions on their campuses which would help the extension program. Since a doctor's degree is required for such positions, however, it is almost impossible to find extension workers to supply the requests. Should our committee encourage outstanding extension workers who might have an interest in and an aptitude for advanced work to prepare themselves for such responsibilities?

Mr. Ben Cook emphasized that:

1. There is greater demand for advanced training for agents because of the increased proportion of better trained farm people.
2. County extension workers are now more generally recognized as representatives of the land-grant colleges than formerly. As such they should be better trained than they can be in the undergraduate program.
3. The Extension Service should give greater attention to modernizing its service and to training its workers to direct a truly modern service.
4. In Texas recently 62 out of 188 agents reported that they were interested in graduate training.

Mrs. Spidle spoke to these points:

1. There is a problem of administrative and supervisory training for home economics extension personnel. It is unfair to funnel persons interested in graduate training in supervision or administration into a major in adult education as is now commonly done. The needs of the supervisory staff are different from those of others. It is a function of the land-grant college to service its personnel. Since there is a need for a more flexible, functional program for home economists who are going into administrative positions and a degree is recognized as a yardstick in our present framework, there is an opportunity here which should not be turned over to other schools than the land-grant colleges.

Miss Thomas, a Tennessee district agent, has recently completed work for a master's degree at Cornell University. She described the conditions regarding her undergraduate and extension induction training which led her to feel a need for graduate study. She emphasized her need for a better preparation in psychology and human relations and in methods of teaching. She paid tribute to the Farm Foundation for its assistance to her and to Cornell for the excellent graduate training program which she could develop there.

Mr. Claude Davis raised the question as to whose need for graduate study was being discussed. He emphasized the point that although all agents, in his opinion, felt the need for training, he doubted that they generally wanted to enroll as graduate students to get this training. There is no financial incentive in the way of advancement or increased pay for graduate work done by county staff members. For all but the exceptional county worker, our goal should be professional improvement but not graduate work. The administration could not support having one-fifth of its personnel in school each year.

For the State workers a master's degree should be required, but there is no advantage to them to have a doctor's degree. There is great value in resident graduate training but not in degree work. If there is need for training in over-all administration and supervision, some school should give it, but not all should try to supply it. We need more across-the-board selection for those who do want to take credit work.

In the general discussion following the panel, Dr. Morgan commented that there is a lack of leadership in prescribing curriculum changes for extension workers. Such leadership, he felt, should come from extension. The main job is one of selling. Extension is not doing its best in recruitment and in keeping the student group interested. The assurance of employment by vocational education is one block to more students taking useful courses of a general agriculture nature. Counselors do not know extension needs.

Miss Noer commented that we ask for special courses for extension people and thereby do a great disservice to students. Extension workers should have the privilege of sitting in class with the great professors of various disciplines and with students who have had a wide background from various disciplines.

Director Frank Peck, of the Farm Foundation, suggested that (1) the national committee on training should push for more leniency in leave arrangements; (2) he stressed, also, that we need to provide in some way for extension workers to get training which will lead to an understanding of the relation of government to people and people to government, rather than so much emphasis on political science and agricultural policy. We need the technique of handling public affairs without getting into the price of cotton as a political factor. The lack of skill in handling discussions of public affairs makes extension workers avoid their inclusion in their programs. There is a rising demand on the part of farm people, however, and we need some emphasis for the next 10 years on the techniques for working on public affairs. He cited Cornell, Michigan, Minnesota, Indiana, Ohio, and Iowa as States which have been successfully working on an educational program in public affairs for the past 10 years or so.

In closing the session Dean McLeod thanked Director Peck for his strong interest, generous financial support, and wise counsel to extension on its training programs.

Dean McLeod indicated to the group that a full report of the conference would be made to the Organization and Policy Committee at their June meeting in Washington.

The conference was called by Director J. H. McLeod, as chairman of the Land-Grant College Senate Committee on Pre-Service and Graduate Training of Extension Workers. It was a follow-up in the series of such regional conferences initiated last year with the Central Region (in Chicago) under the chairmanship of Dean Deering. The Knoxville conference was both an occasion for the meeting of the Senate Committee on Training and an opportunity for the committee to get acquainted with the work under way in the Southern Region.

The following persons were in attendance:

J. H. McLeod, Dean and Director of Extension, Tenn., chairman
Mary L. Collings, In Charge, Personnel Training Section, Division of
Field Studies and Training, Extension Service, USDA, secretary
T. R. Bryant, Associate Director of Extension, Ky.
Lurline Collier, State Home Agent, Extension Service, Ga.
Dr. Benjamin D. Cook, Assistant to Dean of Agriculture, Texas A. & M. College
C. W. Davis, Assistant State Agent and Professor of Agricultural Extension
Education, La.
J. W. Fanning, Chairman, Division of Agricultural Economics,
University of Georgia
Miss Claire Gilbert, Associate Professor, Home Economics Extension,
University of Tennessee
Thelma Graves, Assistant Professor of Home Economics, Alabama Polytechnic
C.W. Jones, Dean, Graduate School, Cornell University
V. E. Kivlin, Dean, College of Agriculture, University of Wisconsin
Ruth D. Noer, Head, Division of Home Economics, College of Agriculture,
West Virginia University
Frank W. Peck, Managing Director, Farm Foundation, Chicago, Ill.
H. J. Putnam, Leader, Field Studies and Training, Extension Service,
Miss.
P. H. Senn, Head, Department of Agronomy, University of Florida
D. H. Morgan, Dean, Colorado A. & M. College
W. E. Skelton, Head, 4-H Club Department, Extension Service, Va.
Fred Sloan, State Leader, Program Planning, Extension Service, N. C.
Mrs. Marion Spidle, Dean, College of Home Economics, Alabama Polytechnic
Alta Thomas, District Home Agent, Extension Service, Tennessee Technological
W. B. Wood, Assistant Dean, College of Agriculture, Ohio State University
Joe E. Vaile, Professor of Horticulture, and Member, Graduate Council,
University of Arkansas
Jessie W. Harris, Vice Dean, College of Home Economics, University of
Tennessee

Agenda for the Meeting

1. What courses, outside of the technical fields, are best suited for undergraduate students who are preparing for extension work?
2. What subjects should be included in an undergraduate curriculum to best prepare for extension work?
3. How far should colleges go in training undergraduate students in extension techniques?
4. What system, if any, should be followed in providing an opportunity for undergraduates to work with county extension agents for college credit?
5. Attitudes in the land-grant colleges toward training in extension work.

6. Panel - The need of graduate training for the extension worker.

Dean Charles W. Jones, Graduate School, Cornell, Leader
Miss Mary L. Collings, Extension Service, USDA
Mrs. Marion Spidle, Dean, College of Home Economics,
Alabama Polytechnic Institute
Miss Alta Thomas, District Home Agent, Tennessee (recently
completed work for master's degree at Cornell University)
Mr. C. W. Davis, Assistant State Agent and Professor of
Agricultural Extension Education, Louisiana State University
Mr. Benjamin D. Cook, Assistant to Dean of Agriculture, and
Professor of Agricultural Extension Education, Texas A. & M.

7. Evaluation by the committee of recommendations made at the Chicago conference, regarding the percentage of time that should be devoted to basic subjects for undergraduate training.

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Eleven Southern States were represented in the conference: Kentucky, Georgia, Texas, Louisiana, Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, Florida, Virginia, North Carolina, and Arkansas. In addition Director Frank Peck, of the Farm Foundation, Dr. D. H. Morgan, of Colorado A. & M., Mr. W. B. Wood, of Ohio, and the committee members represented the three other regions and so related the discussion in part to plans and problems in the training program throughout the Extension Service.

Summary for the Meeting